AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. **(currently amended)** An electric gas lighter for a gas range, said lighter comprising:

a lighting circuit (5) for generating sparks at at least one burner (3) of the gas range, [[;]] said lighting circuit (5) being connectable ~~connected~~ to a power line (10) supplying a supply voltage (V_S), and having an enabling terminal (12) for enabling or disabling spark generation when said enabling terminal is connected to or disconnected from ~~a reference potential line~~ ground (33), respectively; and ~~characterized by comprising~~

at least one hand-operated switch ~~switching means~~ (7) for said at least one burner, said switch having at least one first terminal that is connected to said enabling terminal (12) of said lighting circuit (5) by a connecting line (35), and ~~defined by a single insulated conductor; and~~ at least one second terminal ~~connected to said reference potential line (33)~~ that is grounded.

2. **(currently amended)** A gas lighter as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ comprising ~~said hand-operated switching means (7) comprise~~ a number of said hand-operated switches connected in parallel between said connecting line (35) and said ground ~~reference potential line~~ (33);

each of said hand-operated switches corresponding to ~~numbering~~ one ~~for each of~~ among a plurality of said burners (3), and being operated by means of respective regulating knobs (4).

3. **(currently amended)** A gas lighter as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~

wherein said lighting circuit (5) comprises:

at least one first input terminal (8) connectable ~~connected~~ to said power line (10);

at least one output terminal (13, 13a) for generating sparks at said at least one burner (3);

a transformer (22) having a primary winding (22a) connected between a first node and a second node (15, 16), and at least one secondary winding (22b) connected to said at least one output terminal (13, 13a); and

an electronically controlled switch ~~switching means~~ (24) interposed between said first input terminal (8) and said primary winding (22a), and having a control terminal (24a) connected to said enabling terminal (12).

4. **(currently amended)** An electric gas lighter, comprising

a lighting circuit (5) for generating sparks at at least one burner (3), said lighting circuit (5) being connectable to a power line (10) supplying a supply voltage and having an enabling terminal (12) for enabling or disabling spark generation when connected to or disconnected from a reference-potential line (33), respectively; and

hand-operated switching means (7) having at least one first terminal connected to said enabling terminal (12) of said lighting circuit (5) by a single connecting line (35), and at least one second terminal connected to said reference-potential line (33);

wherein said lighting circuit (5) comprises:

at least one first input terminal (8) connectable to said power line (10);

at least one output terminal (13, 13a) for generating sparks at said at least one burner (3);

a transformer (22) having a primary winding (22a) connected between a first node (15) and a second node (16), and at least one secondary winding (22b) connected to said at least one output terminal (13; 13a); and

electronically controlled switching means (24) interposed between said first input terminal (8) and said primary winding (22a);

wherein ~~A gas lighter as claimed in claim 3, characterized in that~~ said electronically

controlled switching means (24) comprise a transistor having a first conducting terminal connected to said first node (15), a second conducting terminal connected to said first input terminal (8), and a control terminal (24a) ~~defining said control terminal (24a) of said electronically controlled switching means~~ connected to said enabling terminal (12).

5. **(currently amended)** A gas lighter as claimed in claim 3, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said electronically controlled switch comprises ~~switching means (24) comprise~~ a silicon controlled rectifier.

6. **(currently amended)** A gas lighter as claimed in claim 4, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said lighting circuit (5) also comprises:

a second input terminal (9) connectable ~~connected~~ to a neutral line;

a rectifier diode (26) connected between said first input terminal (8) and said first conducting terminal of said ~~electronically controlled switching means (24)~~ transistor;

a capacitor (19) connected between said first node and said second node (15, 16), downstream from said electronically controlled switching means (24);

discharging means (21) connected in series to said primary winding (22a) of said transformer (22); and

voltage-dividing means (25) connected between said second conducting terminal of said ~~electronically controlled switching means (24)~~ transistor and said enabling terminal (12), and having an intermediate node connected to said control terminal (24a).

7. **(new)** The gas lighter of claim 1, wherein said ground includes a conducting part of the gas range, and said at least one second terminal of said hand-operated switch is electrically connected to said conducting part of the gas range.

8. **(new)** An electric gas lighter for a gas range, said lighter comprising:

a lighting circuit being connectable to a power source for generating sparks at at least one burner of the gas range, said lighting circuit having an enabling node and being configured so that a capability of said lighting circuit to generate sparks depends on presence or absence of a reference potential on said node;

at least one hand-operated switch for said at at least one burner, said switch having a first contact and a second contact which is connected to said reference potential; and

a connecting element connecting said switch and said lighting circuit, said connecting element consisting essentially of a single insulated wire that connects the first contact of said switch with said node of said lighting circuit, whereby switching operations of said switch cause said reference potential to be applied to or removed from said node.

9. **(new)** The gas lighter of claim 8, wherein the gas range includes a conducting part, and said second contact of said switch is electrically connected to said conducting part of the gas range.

10. **(new)** The gas lighter of claim 8, wherein said reference potential is the ground potential.

11. **(new)** The gas lighter of claim 8, wherein

a voltage of said power source is provided between at least two lines, which include a hot line and a neutral line, and to which the lighting circuit being connected; and

said voltage is not present between said first and second contacts of said switch regardless of whether said switch is open or closed.

12. **(new)** The gas lighter of claim 8, wherein

a voltage of said power source is provided between at least two lines, which include a hot line and a neutral line, and to which the lighting circuit being connected; and

the first contact of said switch is connected to one of said two lines via said single insulated wire, said node and a voltage divider.

13. **(new)** The gas lighter of claim 12, wherein said lighting circuit comprises:

a spark generating circuit for generating sparks at said at least one burner; and

an electronically controlled switch coupled between said lines and said spark generating circuit for selectively supplying the voltage of said power source to said spark generating circuit depending on presence or absence of said reference potential on said node;

wherein said electronically controlled switch has a control terminal for turning on or off said electronically controlled switch, said control terminal being connected to a middle point of said voltage divider.

14. **(new)** The gas lighter of claim 13, wherein said spark generating circuit comprises:

at least one output terminal for generating sparks at said at least one burner; and

a transformer having a primary winding connected between a first node and a second node, and at least one secondary winding connected to said at least one output terminal;

wherein said electronically controlled switch comprises a transistor having a first conducting terminal connected to said first node, a second conducting terminal connectable to one of said lines of said power source, and said control terminal.

15. **(new)** The gas lighter of claim 13, wherein said electronically controlled switch comprises a silicon controlled rectifier.

16. **(new)** The gas lighter of claim 14, wherein the second node is connected to the other of said lines of said power source, and said spark generating circuit also comprises:

a capacitor connected between said first node and said second node, downstream from said electronically controlled switch; and

a discharger for said capacitor, said discharger being connected in series to said primary winding of said transformer.

17. **(new)** An electric gas lighter for a gas range, said lighter comprising:

spark generating circuit means for generating sparks at least one burner of the gas range;

first, electronically controlled switching means coupled between a power source and said spark generating circuit means for controllably supplying a voltage of said power source to said spark generating circuit means depending on presence or absence of a ground potential on a control node of said first switching means; and

second switching means for controllably grounding the control node to turn on or off said first switching means.

18. **(new)** The gas lighter of claim 17, further comprising connecting means for connecting said first and second switches, said connecting means consisting essentially of a single insulated wire.